

CITY OF BELLEVUE
CITY COUNCIL

Summary Minutes of Extended Study Session

October 13, 2003
6:00 p.m.

Council Conference Room
Bellevue, Washington

PRESENT: Mayor Marshall, Deputy Mayor Degginger, and Councilmembers Creighton, Davidson, Lee, Mosher, and Noble

ABSENT: None.

1. Executive Session

Mayor Marshall called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. There was no Executive Session.

2. Oral Communications

- (a) Peter Jouflas explained that Plaza 520 LLC recently asked the Planning Commission to table the rezone applications for the Northup East and Plaza 520 Comprehensive Plan amendments until next year. He noted the company then filed a conditional use permit application on September 17, 2003. Mr. Jouflas asked Council to consider initiating a Code amendment to allow automobile sales outright in the LI (light industrial) district along NE 20th Street between 130th and 140th Avenues. This would be more favorable to property owners and prospective tenants than the current conditional use permit (CUP) option because it is easier to obtain financing for an allowed use rather than a conditional use.
- (b) Don Dana spoke on behalf of his father regarding property involved in the Dana Comprehensive Plan amendment. Since Council's last discussion on this matter, Mr. Dana collected signatures of persons in favor of changing the use of the property. He asked Council to reconsider the Dana CPA proposal.

3. Study Session

- (a) Council New Initiatives

No new initiatives were introduced.

(b) 2003 Comprehensive Plan Amendments

City Manager Steve Sarkozy opened discussion of the 2003 annual Comprehensive Plan amendments (CPAs) and related Land Use Code amendments.

Planning Director Dan Stroh noted that the state Growth Management Act limits Comprehensive Plan amendments to once per year. He noted a summary of current docketed CPAs on page 3-4 of the Council packet. The Planning Commission recommends approval of two of the CPA proposals, partial approval of one CPA, and denial of two CPAs. The Commission recommends that three of the CPAs be moved to the 2004 annual CPA work program.

Mr. Stroh reviewed each CPA proposal. Ken Schiring, Planning Commission Chair, was in attendance to respond to Councilmembers' questions.

Mr. Stroh said the Planning Commission recommends approval of the I-405 OLB Auto Sales CPA, which will amend Wilburton Subarea Policy S-WI-16a to permit auto sales in the GC (General Commercial), CB (Community Business), and OLB (Office/Limited Business) districts on both sides of 116th Avenue from the new SE 8th Street exit off I-405 to NE 8th Street.

Upon polling the Council, Mayor Marshall indicated Council support for the I-405 OLB Auto Sales CPA.

Mr. Stroh said the Planning Commission recommends approval of the Downtown Pedestrian Crossings CPA, which amends the Downtown Subarea Plan to provide policy direction for pedestrian crossings in the public right-of-way. The recommended new policy states that pedestrian crossings may be appropriate over the public right-of-way on Bellevue Way between NE 4th Street and NE 8th Street, and over NE 4th and NE 8th Streets between Bellevue Way and 110th Avenue NE, provided there is a clear demonstration of public benefit and design criteria are met.

Responding to Mr. Creighton, Mr. Schiring said he initially envisioned pedestrian bridges large enough to accommodate a coffee shop or other gathering place. However, the Planning Commission's discussions were focused on allowing simpler elevated crosswalks.

Responding to Mr. Lee, Mr. Stroh said this is one of the most important urban design issues in Bellevue's history. Although not specified in the CPA, discussions of the elevated crossings have focused on providing open rather than enclosed walkways. Mr. Stroh noted the challenge of designing the crossings in a way that they become assets within the public realm and add a public benefit. Mr. Lee cautioned that too many design restrictions on pedestrian crossings could discourage their development.

Dr. Davidson noted that the current Comprehensive Plan policy already provides for the grade-separated movement of pedestrians across Bellevue Way. He is reluctant to discuss the CPA without also discussing the implications of associated Land Use Code amendments. He wants to encourage designs that will benefit both businesses and people.

Mr. Stroh clarified that the proposed policy expands the potential for elevated walkways beyond Bellevue Way to additional downtown streets. It specifies elevated walkways while the current policy allowing grade-separated crossings could result in below-grade crossings.

Dr. Davidson noted the definitions on page 3-28 of the packet. Skybridges typically connect building to building while pedestrian bridges generally provide both building-to-building and sidewalk connections and function as part of the public realm.

Mr. Mosher expressed support for the overall concept and the potential for having enclosed bridges. He cautioned against imposing extensive design restrictions or making the policy overly complex.

Responding to Mayor Marshall, Mr. Stroh said the private party who asked Council to consider elevated pedestrian crossings is satisfied with the recommended policy.

Mayor Marshall raised the issues of access for disabled citizens and security associated with the walkway. She noted Council's interest in reviewing the associated Land Use Code amendments along with the CPA. Mr. Stroh said the Planning Commission will be discussing the Land Use Code amendments this week.

Mr. Creighton concurred with Mr. Noble's earlier suggestion to change the wording in the proposed policy from pedestrian bridges to pedestrian crossings.

Mr. Noble noted the definition of pedestrian bridges excludes fully enclosed walkways. He does not support this specific design restriction at this time. Mr. Noble suggested approving the concept of elevated pedestrian walkways but waiting to address specific requirements with the Land Use Code amendment.

Mr. Lee agreed with Mr. Noble's suggestion. He noted the Planning Commission's interest (Page 3-29 of the Council packet) in considering additional locations for elevated crossings and questioned the locations specified in the proposed policy language. Mr. Schiring said the Planning Commission recommends a conservative approach to allowing elevated walkways in order to determine the impact and feasibility of additional potential locations.

Responding to Deputy Mayor Degginger, Mr. Stroh said changes in circumstances such as development activity, changes in traffic volumes, changes in pedestrian volumes, and safety issues could warrant a review of additional locations in the future.

Following additional brief discussion, Councilmembers expressed support for the proposed policy, revised to refer to pedestrian crossings rather than bridges.

Mr. Stroh moved on to the NE 20th Street Commercial Area CPA which: 1) provides a map change on 2.4 acres from split O (Office) and CB to either O or CB, and 2) establishes the CB designation on a half acre of potentially annexable property (Taco Bell on 148th Avenue). The Planning Commission recommends denial of the first provision and approval of the second.

Responding to Mayor Marshall, Councilmembers indicated support for the Planning Commission's recommendation on the NE 20th Street CPA.

Mr. Stroh said the Planning Commission recommends moving three CPAs – Belmont Place, Plaza 520, and Northup East – to the 2004 CPA work program. Responding to Mr. Degginger, Mr. Stroh explained that it is possible these CPAs will be dropped if development solutions can be achieved under the existing zoning. Councilmembers expressed support for the Commission's recommendation to defer the three CPAs.

Mr. Stroh said the Commission recommends denial of the Dana CPA, which would implement a map change for 1.06 acres from SF-H (single family – high density) to MF-L (multifamily – low density). Responding to Mr. Creighton, Mr. Stroh said petitions both supporting and opposing the proposal have been received. Dr. Davidson indicated he might propose a revision to the CPA next week. Mayor Marshall noted general Council support for the Commission's recommendation.

Mr. Stroh said the Commission recommends denial of the Botch Family CPA, which proposes a map change for 1.02 acres at 1319 Bellevue Way SE from SF-H to SF-UR (single family – urban residential). Responding to Mr. Degginger, Mr. Schiring said the Commission's discussion focused on whether or not there were changed circumstances to justify the proposal. There have been land use changes on the east side of the street but fewer changes on the west side of the street. Some residents in the area were opposed to the CPA proposal. Mr. Stroh noted a 4-3 split vote by the Commission on this item. Some of the commissioners felt it was micro-managing the outcome of the site.

Responding to Mr. Lee, Mr. Schiring said the Commission was interested in staff's suggestion that housing units be limited to a maximum of 2,500 square feet each. However, commissioners did not see adequate justification regarding changed circumstances to support the proposal.

Mr. Mosher commended the Commission for its deliberations. He does not see any justification to change the character of the neighborhood by allowing attached housing. Mayor Marshall and Mr. Degginger concurred.

Mayor Marshall thanked Mr. Schiring and the Planning Commission for their work.

(c) 2004 Comprehensive Plan Update Required by State

Mr. Stroh reviewed the upcoming 2004 Comprehensive Plan update and Council's anticipated involvement in the process. He noted the project timeline on page 3-85 of the Council packet.

(d) Land Use Code Updates

Land Use Director Carol Helland introduced seven ordinances recommended for approval by the Planning Commission to amend the Land Use Code. Council action on the ordinances is scheduled for the October 20th Council meeting.

- (1) Ordinance Nos. ____ removing references to the Sammamish Community Council throughout the Land Use Code, and removing references to the East Bellevue Community Council in some parts of the Land Use Code based on the EBCC's reconsideration of certain previous actions.

Ms. Helland described the package of five ordinances to remove references to the Sammamish Community Council, which no longer exists, and to remove references to the East Bellevue Community Council in some parts of the Land Use Code based on that Council's reconsideration of certain previously disapproved ordinances.

Mayor Marshall indicated Council consensus to proceed with the package of ordinances.

Responding to Dr. Davidson, Ms. Helland said the East Bellevue Community Council was given a list of all ordinances it previously denied. Some have been superseded by subsequent adoptions, and the EBCC was not willing to consider a few of the items. Dr. Davidson requested a copy of the list.

- (2) Ordinance No. ____ amending the Bellevue Land Use Code to remove outdated references, correct cross references, and correct errors in the Code; and establishing an effective date.

Ms. Helland described a proposed ordinance to remove outdated references, correct cross references, and correct errors in the Land Use Code. The Planning Commission recommends approval of this ordinance.

Mayor Marshall noted Council consensus to support the proposed ordinance.

- (3) Ordinance No. ____ amending the Bellevue Land Use Code to clarify and improve process provisions of the Code; and establishing an effective date.

Ms. Helland said the third proposed ordinance amends the Land Use Code to clarify and improve process provisions and to allow phased construction of large downtown projects.

Responding to Mr. Mosher, Ms. Helland said Seattle has similar long-term development provisions. Bellevue's proposed requirements ensure that each phase represents a completed project with associated amenities, while providing flexibility for larger, complex projects.

Council indicated support for the proposed ordinance.

- (e) Ordinance No. ____ amending the Bellevue Sign Code to improve the clarity of existing regulations, allow installation of vehicular entry signs at the access drives to shopping centers in the Community Business (CB) District, allow the use of LED reader boards for non-commercial public service signs, and provide additional flexibility for estate sale and temporary joint business sales event signs; and adding a new section 22B.10.107 to the Bellevue City Code.

Ms. Helland described proposed amendments to the Bellevue Sign Code to clarify existing regulations, allow the installation of vehicular entry signs at access drives to shopping centers in the Community Business district, allow the use of LED reader boards for non-commercial public service signs, and provide additional flexibility for estate sale and temporary joint sale event signs.

Responding to Mr. Noble, Ms. Helland explained that the access signs are in addition to other shopping center signage. She said staff's recommendation is intended to be consistent with other directional sign provisions in the Code.

Responding to Mr. Creighton, Ms. Helland clarified that the intent of the directional signs is to list businesses that are not visible from the street. However, among other requirements a business must have an external façade to qualify for directional signage, unless excess sign capacity is available.

Responding to Mr. Noble, Ms. Helland clarified the request from Mr. Strand and Mr. Sher. The policy as drafted dictates that half of the signage capacity must reflect the shopping center name and the other half can be used to list individual businesses. Mr. Strand and Mr. Sher would like to be able to allocate the sign content as they see fit. Ms. Helland explained that the policy is based on the objective to provide shopping center identification.

Mayor Marshall feels enhanced directional signage for smaller businesses within centers would be helpful for shoppers.

Responding to Mrs. Marshall, Ms. Helland said the minimum height to allow the safe passage of emergency vehicles will be determined with the Fire Department. This requirement will be specified in the submittal guidelines to inform applicants at the beginning of the permit process.

Mr. Noble expressed support for the proposal submitted by Mr. Strand and Mr. Sher. Deputy Mayor Degginger concurred.

Mr. Lee was skeptical about the need for and objective of the policy change.

Mr. Terry commented that signs could become confusing, listing too many businesses, without the requirement suggested by staff to allocate half of the sign to the shopping center name.

Responding to Mr. Creighton, Ms. Helland said the signs would be limited to one per right-of-way (street) access.

Noting the proliferation of signs in the Factoria area, which follows different sign regulations, Mayor Marshall expressed support for staff's recommendation.

Deputy Mayor Degginger encouraged more flexibility in the proposed policy. Mr. Mosher agreed and asked how many shopping centers will be affected by the regulation.

Moving on, Ms. Helland said LED reader board signs would be allowed for non-commercial purposes such as schools and churches. Additional provisions of the proposed ordinance will allow temporary estate sale and joint business sale signs.

Mr. Lee expressed concern about the potential intensity of LED signs, which can be distracting for drivers. Ms. Helland said the purpose of this provision is to allow organizations to utilize new technology. However, signs are allowed for informational purposes only and are not allowed to provide animation or continuously changing graphics. For example, messages are limited to changing only once every eight hours and the signs must be turned off after 10:00 p.m.

Mayor Marshall asked staff to provide information regarding the number of shopping centers in Bellevue that are larger than six acres and will therefore be subject to the vehicle entry sign regulations. Deputy Mayor Degginger would like the policy language to reflect greater flexibility regarding sign content.

(f) General Information Technology (IT) Overview

Mr. Sarkozy introduced the first quarterly review of Information Technology projects and initiatives.

Chief Information Officer Toni Cramer reviewed the City's involvement with twelve partner cities in the eCitygov alliance (eCitygov.net), which provides online permitting and other services serving nearly 600,000 citizens. MyBuildingPermit.com is moving into Phase 2, which will provide the ability to handle special requests and to view current status information for all online permit and inspection transactions. Parks Department online class registration will be introduced next spring. The eCitygov.net alliance provides economic development and GIS-related information and sponsors educational forums as well.

Ms. Cramer said the City has participated in several joint RFP (request for proposals) processes with other cities to maximize the benefit of taxpayers' resources. Bellevue recently began hosting applications for other cities due to its significant investments in technology infrastructure. The City is currently exploring the potential for joint fiber and networking projects to further enhance the utilization of technology investments.

Turning to specific projects, Ms. Cramer said the AT&T network expansion project is now complete. As a result, 30 City facilities are networked into an institutional system, which has allowed the City to reduce its lease lines and save approximately \$111,000 annually. Employees at facilities other than City Hall can now use applications not previously available, resulting in increased productivity and efficiency.

Ms. Cramer said the economic development GIS browser (eastsideproperty.biz) was developed by Bellevue and is expanding to cover the region. It will eventually become an eCitygov.net application that will allow citizens to view and print property sale and lease information, perform site searches, develop demographic reports, and access public data. A residential component is planned as well. Additional accomplishments include the implementation of anti-spam software, enhancements to the 911 system to automatically provide physical location information for City

employees calling 911, and expanded access to automated inspection requests for all development services functions.

Ms. Cramer reviewed the status of key projects and explained that projects are monitored to ensure they are on schedule, on budget, and within scope. She noted that the e-Parks project to implement class registration software has been delayed due to new requirements that will ensure the software is compatible with the eCitygov.net web site. She said the Police records management system project has been delayed because the software vendor was acquired by another company.

Ms. Cramer reviewed items that will be coming before Council for approval:

October 20 Consent Calendar:

- GSI network support contract (Server, network and security administration), \$1.725 million over three years.
- Database administration services contract, \$180,000 for one year.
- Joint interlocal fiber project (Kirkland, Lake Washington School District, and University of Washington), \$0.
- ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) system/Moss Adams quality assurance contract, \$150,000 over two years. – Ms. Cramer explained that the project budget provides for quality assurance services. Moss Adams is an independent entity hired to review the project on a regular basis.

November Consent Calendar:

- Parks registration contract, \$160,000.
- ERP point-of-sale contract, cost to be determined.
- Municipal network business plan contract, \$100,000.

Ms. Cramer said a full update on the ERP system project will be provided to Council in a November Study Session.

Responding to Mr. Lee, Ms. Cramer said commercial brokers maintain the eastsideproperty.biz web site. Links to the site are provided on the City, Chamber of Commerce, and Bellevue Downtown Association web sites.

Mayor Marshall thanked Ms. Cramer for the update.

- (g) Issuance and sale of refunding bonds
(Action to approve issuance and sale of the refunding bonds is scheduled for a City Council Special Meeting to be held on Thursday, October 16, at 11:30 a.m.)

Mr. Sarkozy opened discussion about a proposal to refund certain outstanding debt in order to reduce debt service costs. He said it is similar to refinancing a home and takes advantage of current low interest rates.

Finance Director Jan Hawn explained that two bonds are eligible for refunding. The ordinance to approve the issuance and sale of two refunding bonds will be presented for Council action at a Special Meeting on October 16. The proposed bond issues are expected to achieve a present value savings of approximately \$400,000.

Responding to Mr. Lee, Ms. Hawn clarified that a minimum present value savings of three percent of the principal amount of the refunding debt is required in order to issue the bonds.

Responding to Mr. Creighton, Ms. Hawn said the time period of the debt will remain the same with the refunding bonds.

At 8:39 p.m., Mayor Marshall declared the meeting adjourned.

Myrna L. Basich
City Clerk

kaw